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GLADIOLI



1921

**OF INTEREST
TO FLORISTS**

By Fritz Bahr

Distributed By

JOHN LEWIS CHILDS, Inc.
FLOWERFIELD, Long Island, N. Y.

CHILDS GLADIOLI are noted the world over for SUPERIOR MERIT. Grown at Flowerfield, L. I., N. Y.

We also have large plantings of CANNAS, DAHLIAS, IRISES, bearded and Japanese LILIUMS, PEONIES, Etc., at Flowerfield, Long Island.

***"The Home of
Childs Gladioli"***



GLADIOLI

AS MONEY MAKERS FOR THE COMMERCIAL FLORIST

No matter how beautiful a certain class of plants may be, in order to appeal to the Commercial Florist, they must be money makers, and this is more necessary to-day than it ever was before; the handling of a crop, no matter what it may consist of, becomes more and more expensive and the returns have to be in proportion, in order to realize a fair margin of profit.

The Private Gardener may admire a bed or border filled with the very latest creation in *Gladioli* and capture blue ribbons at the show with his flowers, as with him the price of the bulbs doesn't matter nor does he look for any other compensation than that of being able to produce the latest and best. But with the Florist this is quite different; when you talk *Gladioli* to him, he may admit that most remarkable progress has been made in bringing out new

varieties, and one doesn't recognize in them those of twenty-five or thirty years ago; that *Gladioli* are among the showiest of all Summer flowering plants, excellent cut flowers, belonging in every garden, etc., but from the viewpoint of the Commercial Florist it really doesn't pay to grow them. Like the Peony, the Phlox and the Iris, they are beautiful enough, but of little value as money makers.

Why They Don't Pay

Each year it is practically the same thing when it is "*Gladiolus Time*"; the market is glutted with them, they seem to come in boxes and sugar barrels, tied in bundles of twenty-five, long stalks, full of green buds and maybe a few bruised flowers at the bottom. Some are unpacked and find their way to the department store, some to help decorate a show window and others are turned into a Funeral Spray, weighing, when finished, fifty pounds. The balance goes to the street peddler or to the dump; often they die in the cases they come

in—that, at least, is true with ordinary stock—but well-grown spikes of the newest varieties will sell at a good price, but those form only a very small percentage of what is shipped.

The reason for all this is, that when the annual glut arrives, not only is there a limited demand for so-called garden flowers, but every garden and backyard is full of them; *Gladioli* everywhere; the very people who are among our best patrons have their own flowers in their gardens, and it is the very same with Asters or Dahlias.

No, *Gladioli* will never pay for themselves as long as you have to depend on selling the flowers wholesale during the last of August or the month of September, for you can't change those conditions; in fact, as the wide-awake seed house or the *Gladiolus* specialist keeps on advertising more and more in the garden magazines, and still more people plant them, and on the other hand, while still greater numbers of florists and amateurs insist on shipping cut spikes

of ordinary stock to the market, conditions will not improve.

How to Make Them Pay

The easiest way of avoiding a glutted market is to bring the flowers in when there is no glut; that, to those with glass, is almost as simple as to talk about it.

Everyone will agree that there is a ready sale for the flowers at good prices during May, June and July and even part of August up to the time they come in from out-door stock. The florist who retails what he grows has no trouble in realizing from two to three dollars per dozen for cut "*Americas*" during May and June. Is there anything you can grow from a three-cent bulb bringing better returns? Is there a crop we handle under glass requiring less attention or taking up less space than *Gladioli*? Or have you ever heard of the flowers not finding a ready sale?

The better acquainted the public becomes with *Gladioli*, the more the people all over the country plant the bulbs and have their gardens full of their

flowers during September, the more they will want them at times when they can't have them on their own grounds and the more it will pay the average florist to produce them at such times, for it is then that they pay and pay well, and it is under glass that you can bring them to the highest state of perfection; you have no control over wind, rain and other conditions outdoors, but inside you do have, at least to a great extent, and even with bulbs of the newer varieties at a high price, it is possible to have them bring handsome returns; why shouldn't fancy stock of *Gladioli* bring five and six dollars per dozen, the same as Chrysanthemums or Carnations? To my mind the only way to make the new ones pay is to grow them under glass, and even the smallest grower, the one with not the very latest style of houses, can successfully handle them as long as he has five feet of head room above his benches; if he hasn't bench room he can grow them equally as well in pots and have no trouble, should he have more flowers than he can retail, to dis-

pose of them at wholesale at a good price.

Those who claim there is no money in *Gladioli* haven't paid any attention to forcing them or made any effort to bring them in during October, or even later, which is another way to avoid the glut; as long as they keep on planting when everybody plants, they will also harvest the same as the others.

Gladioli Under Glass for Early Forcing

A Carnation house temperature (50 degrees at night) is the right one for *Gladioli* during the Winter months; they will also do well in almost any soil and for bench culture a depth of five inches is sufficient, or you can grow them in solid beds, which, for late forcing, is preferable. Still another way is to grow them in pots, by planting three first size bulbs in a six-inch pot.

For bench culture, plant in rows, 12 inches apart and three inches in the rows. The first planting should be made

about the middle of December, and in order to save space, you can plant the bulbs into 3½-inch pots and place below a bench where they can remain until the plants have made about six inches of growth, which will take at least six weeks, during which time the space on the bench might be used for something else. The ones planted, say, December 10th, will come into flower by the end of April and require more time than any other planting you make, but in order to always have plants to cut from, a good way is to keep on planting every ten days or two weeks.

Hardly ever are *Gladioli* bothered with disease or insect pests, excepting Green-fly, which is easily kept in check by spraying with nicotine solution. What the plants do need, however, is staking; a spike of *Gladioli* is almost useless if it has a crooked stem. There are always plants which will fail to flower, but this is not nearly as apt to be the fault of the bulbs if first sized ones were planted, as due to too much

or not enough water, and you can't be too particular about this. The bench should never be allowed to become dust dry before water is applied, nor should it be watered when in a moist state; it is simple enough but frequently we are in such a hurry that we haven't time to ascertain what condition the soil is in.

For Late Flowering

In order to have plants in bloom during June and early July, bulbs can be potted up about the middle of March; carry them below a bench and later on top, to be planted out in a cold frame about the first of May. Use sashes for protection until danger of frost is past. The plants will start to flower by the 20th of June. Another way is to plant them on a solid bed indoors about the middle of March and from that planting you will, by the middle of June, cut your finest spikes. Another way is to start bulbs in April in pots and later on plant out in the open; these plants are bound to flower long before any outdoor planted ones.

Pot Culture

As stated above, you can successfully force *Gladioli* in pots, and with three plants in a six-inch pot they pay well for the room they take up. The great advantage with pot culture is that the pots can be moved about almost anywhere and at any time, which means a lot to the smaller grower; plants started in pots in December will flower as soon, if not sooner, than those grown in benches, due largely to the fact that the roots in the pots are confined.

Gladioli as a Catch Crop

With most of us there is always something which is liable to go wrong; even with the best of care and attention a bench of Carnations, Roses or something else may go back, and if this happens during the Winter months, I doubt whether the bench could be filled with anything better than *Gladioli*, or you may have a bench empty after the Chrysanthemums are through or when the Christmas rush is over and want this bench again by the end of May or there-

abouts. With a nice lot of *Gladioli* started into growth in pots you can quickly fill the bench and make the space pay for itself.

Some growers plant *Gladioli* between their Carnations about the first of January; I don't believe in doing this if the Carnations are in good shape, but if they are not or look as if they would play out soon, it is the proper thing, for it takes weeks before the *Gladioli* grow large enough to shade the Carnations; however, a better way is to devote, if possible, a whole bench to *Gladioli*; that is, for the best results.

Early Out-Door Planting

Those with frames, either hot-beds or cold frames, can always gain considerable time in getting *Gladioli* into flower by planting the bulbs in such frames, say by the middle of April or even sooner if weather conditions permit, anything and anyway, to avoid having the plants coming into flower around the end of August or early September or whenever in your locality there are *Gladioli* in bloom everywhere.

I don't wish to be understood as advocating trying to avoid having any flowers to cut during that period; that would be wrong, especially for the retail grower, for he, to my mind, should have *Gladioli*, in all colors and shades, from May until November, for he needs them and has use for them every day during that period, but every florist with "Glads" should make a special effort to avoid having his main crop come in at that time. That is the thing to do. You can't and never will make money in planting out 1000 each of "*America*" and "*Mrs. Francis King*" at the same time, say about the first of May, and trust to good luck; that is foolish, but if you can take that amount or five times as many and plan to have the flowers come a few at a time from early to late, you will make it pay.

Late Flowering

In most localities, throughout the East and Middle West, the last planting of *Gladioli* can be made around the 10th of July, and even bulbs not all of the

first size usually flower if not cut down by frost, and such as don't flower are usually good for the following year. During October or just before the Chrysanthemums come in, there is always more or less of a shortage of long stem flowers and good *Gladioli* will come in handy, for there is nothing finer for decorative work, and if you have the late ones planted in five-foot wide beds it is an easy matter to put temporary frames over the beds with sashes; in that way you can keep light frosts out and obtain better flowers.

Varieties for Forcing

For forcing, "*America*" still heads the list of desirable sorts, its beautiful "day-break pink" color makes it so and it is as early as any with the exception perhaps of the *Primulinus Hybrids*, and for those growing *Gladioli* on a small scale under glass I should suggest planting nothing else but "*America*," and even for the large grower this should be the main one: almost any of the white, yellow and light shades of pink sorts

are good for forcing; there is little difference as to earliness, at least not to amount to anything. The light shades sell where the dark ones won't; that is, for cut flowers, yet those interested should by all means give the newer sorts a fair trial under glass and find out for themselves which sorts under their culture and soil will pay best. "*Pink Perfection*" is a fine forcer, so is "*Schwaben*," but better for late. "*Panama*" is excellent under glass, and so is "*Mrs. Frank Pendleton*." "*Chicago White*" is a well known sort and for a salmon "*Halley*" is good and "*Fire King*" a showy scarlet.

FRITZ BAHR.

Highland Park, Ill., 1921.

OUR STOCK OF GLADIOLI IS UNEXCELLED

These prices may be cancelled October 1.

We pay particular attention to grading of bulbs and guarantee them true to name.

		Doz.	100	1000
Gladiolus, America	1 1-4 Up	\$0.50	\$3.00	\$25.00
" "	1 1-2 Up	.60	3.50	30.00
" Augusta	1 1-4 Up	.60	3.50	30.00
" "	1 1-2 Up	.60	4.00	35.00
" Baron Hulot	1 1-4 Up	1.00	7.00	60.00
" " "	1 1-2 Up	1.00	8.00	75.00
" Brenchleyensis	1 1-4 Up	.50	3.00	25.00
" "	1 1-2 Up	.60	3.50	30.00
" Chicago White	1 1-4 Up	.60	4.00	35.00
" " "	1 1-2 Up	.75	5.00	30.00
" Halley	1 1-4 Up	.60	3.50	30.00
" "	1 1-2 Up	.60	4.00	35.00
" Mrs. Watt	1 1-4 Up	.75	5.00	45.00
" Panama	1 1-4 Up	1.00	7.00	60.00
" Princeps	1 1-4 Up	1.00	7.00	65.00
" White America	1 1-4 Up	.75	5.00	45.00
" " "	1 1-2 Up	1.00	7.00	60.00

"Primulinus Hybrids"

In recent years these Hybrids have come to be extremely popular and they deserve every word of praise they get; they are graceful, easy to grow, moderate in price, artistic in colors, which range from sulphur-yellow to chrome-yellow, all shades of orange with now and then a cream and pink among them, but Nasturtium colors predominate; they are the last word in Gladioli for dainty decorations.

	Doz.	100	1000
Regular Grade	\$0.60	\$3.50	\$30.00
Selected Grade75	4.50	40.00

"Say it with Flowers"







"Say it with Flowers"